

- Despite signs of improvement, time remains the most important aspect of teacher working conditions. The category includes educators' need for time to prepare for class and collaborate with other teachers, as well as time to mentor and support new teachers. Only 49.6 percent of respondents report that teachers have time to plan with colleagues during the day.
- Teacher empowerment, involving teachers in the school decision-making process, is the second most significant aspect of teacher working conditions for promoting student achievement.
- Teachers say professional development is best determined based on their needs.
- Significant improvements have been made in the area of time and facilities when compared to data from the 2002 N.C. Teacher Working Conditions Survey. Of these, respondents report the most satisfaction with school facilities, specifically safety and cleanliness.
- More than 84 percent of teachers say their schools are safe.

Of the 2004 survey's 70 questions, 15 questions were designed specifically to assist schools, districts and the state in understanding the needs of teachers to best address professional development offerings. Questions were tailored to assess current offerings in professional development, as well as the training's usefulness to teachers and the time provided to complete it.

The first statewide survey was conducted in 2002.

"We are particularly proud of the tremendous gains in crucial areas related to teaching quality and teacher retention. It appears as if the Governor's numerous initiatives to improve teaching and learning in North Carolina are having an impact," said Eric Hirsch, vice president of policy and partnerships at the Southeast Center for Teaching Quality, the organization conducting the survey.

Other states are now following North Carolina's lead in finding ways to solve teacher recruitment and retention issues. South Carolina completed its first survey this spring with a 28 percent response rate. Georgia will conduct a pilot program modeled after the N.C. Teacher Working Conditions Survey this fall.

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